

# THE REFORM OF THE LITURGY OF THE HOURS OF THE SYRO-MALABAR CHURCH IN LIGHT OF VATICAN II

**Maryann Madhavathu, CMC<sup>♦</sup>**

*Katholieke Universiteit, Leuven*

## Introduction

Fifty years after Vatican II, the influence of the liturgical reform triggered by it has not yet been completely evaluated in the Syro-Malabar Church (SMC). However, there have been many serious studies and discussions about the liturgical identity of this Church in the past century.<sup>1</sup> This paper investigates how Vatican II affected the revision and reform of the Liturgy of the Hours (LH) of the SMC.<sup>2</sup>

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**\*Maryann Madhavathu, CMC**, is a PhD researcher in the research unit of Pastoral Theology at the Faculty of Theology and Religious Studies, KU Leuven, Belgium. She has obtained her Bachelors, Masters, and Advanced Masters degrees in Theology and Religious Studies from the same university. Her research project on the theological relations between the Eucharist and the Liturgy of the Hours in Roman and Syro-Malabar Rites is supervised by Prof. Dr. Joris Geldhof.

<sup>1</sup>The search for the identity of the Syro-Malabar Church has a history of three hundred years. Paul Pallath, "Syro-Malabar Church: Juridical Status and Synodal Functioning," in *Syro-Malabar Church since the Eastern Code: Festschrift in Honour of Prof. George Nedungatt SJ: An Evaluation and Future Prospects, Particular Laws, Statutes, Decrees, Bibliography*, ed. Francis Eluvathingal, Rome: Mar Thoma Yogam, 2002, 45-46. For a latest study on the Identity of SMC see the unpublished dissertation, Bilju Vazhappilly Francis, "A Sacramental Reinterpretation of Syro-Malabar Christian Identity in Dialogue with Louis-Marie Chauvet," Unpublished, KU Leuven, 2013. However, the liturgical identity was taken seriously with the renewal of Holy Qurbana since Vatican II. Geo Thadikkatt, *Liturgical Identity of the Mār Tōmā Nazrāni Church*, Kottayam: OIRSI, 2004, 13 & 112. Mathew Kochupurackal, "Liturgical Development in the Syro-Malabar Church," in *Syro-Malabar Church since the Eastern Code: Festschrift in Honour of Prof. George Nedungatt SJ: An Evaluation and Future Prospects, Particular Laws, Statutes, Decrees, Bibliography*, ed. Francis Eluvathingal, Rome: Mar Thoma Yogam, 2002, 142.

<sup>2</sup>This prayer is known by different names Breviary, Divine Office, Divine Praises and the Liturgy of the Hours. For a discussion on the name of the prayer see, A.M. Roguet, *The Liturgy of the Hours: The General Instruction on the Liturgy of the Hours with*

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Vatican II entails fundamental principles for the reform of liturgy at the beginning of *Sacrosanctum Concilium*<sup>3</sup> confirming that the liturgy is the outstanding means to express the mystery of Christ and the essence of the Church.<sup>4</sup> The Council realised the Church-building potential of liturgy with a profound reflection of its immense importance in the life of the Church.<sup>5</sup> Mostly, however, the word liturgy is used in a narrow sense to indicate the celebration of the Eucharist. But the concept includes the sacraments and all other formal worship of the Church as well. Studies about the liturgical reform in SMC are generally limited to the Eucharist.<sup>6</sup> The current status of the revision of the liturgical texts<sup>7</sup> of SMC shows that the text of the LH is not yet included in the list of officially approved texts.<sup>8</sup>

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a *Commentary*, trans. Peter Coughlan and Peter Purdue, Collegeville, Minnesota: Liturgical Press, 1971, 91-92. See also, Stanislaus Campbell, *From Breviary to Liturgy of the Hours: The Structural Reform of the Roman Office, 1964-1971*, Collegeville, Minnesota: Liturgical Press, 1995. In the present paper we use the name the Liturgy of the Hours. Hereafter used as LH.

<sup>3</sup>*Sacrosanctum Concilium* (SC), the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, was one of the four constitutions of Vatican II. It was approved by the bishops with a vote of 2,147 to 4 and promulgated by Pope Paul VI on December 4, 1963. Henceforth denoted as SC.

<sup>4</sup>Liturgical reform aims to impart vigour to the Christian life of the faithful, to adapt more suitably to the needs of our own times, to foster ecumenism and to strengthen the mission of the Church. SC, 1. "Vatican II preferred the concept of renewal (*renovatio*) and meant by it a comprehensive conversion of the Church as body of Christ and God's people, much more than the adaptation of rubrics in view of preserving an amalgamation of ritual and textual traditions." Joris Geldhof, "Liturgy, Modernity, and Ideology: Reflections on Similarities and Differences between Trent and Vatican II," *Asian Horizons* 7, 1 (2013) 186.

<sup>5</sup>Geldhof, "Liturgy, Modernity, and Ideology," 183-185. Also see SC, 2.

<sup>6</sup>Geo Thadikkatt provides the historical developments of liturgical renewal limited to the restoration of the Eucharist (Holy *Qurbana*). Thadikkatt, *Liturgical Identity*, 116. See another study, Francis Kanichikattil, *To Restore or to Reform? A Critical Study on Current Liturgical Renewal in the Syro-Malabar Church in India*, Bangalore: Dharmaram Publication, 1992, xviii.

<sup>7</sup>The following are the Syro-Malabar liturgical texts: Thaksa of Holy *Qurbana*, Thaksa of Sacraments, Pontifical, Divine Praises, Calendar, Lectionary, Holy Week liturgy, Christmas liturgy, Thaksa of Sacramentals. There are English translations of these Malayalam texts.

<sup>8</sup>The texts formally promulgated are the Thaksa of Holy *Qurbana*, Thaksa of Sacraments and the Pontifical. The Divine Praises, Calendar, the propers of holy *Qurbana*, etc. are now used *ad experimentum*. Nariculam Antony, The Syro-Malabar Liturgical Reform and Pastoral Adaptation, available at, <http://nelsonmcbs.wordpress.com/2012/06/23/the-syro-malabar-liturgical-reform-and-pastoral-adaptation/> accessed on 6/1/13.

Vatican II insisted on 'returning to the sources' with the hope that it would be a suitable medium to guide necessary changes in the liturgical field.<sup>9</sup> This study examines the reform of the LH in SMC in three main sections. The first section provides an overview of the reforms of LH in SMC prior to Vatican II. Vatican II's criteria for liturgical reform are discussed in the second section along with an analysis of their appropriateness for SMC. The final section traces the revision of the LH in this Church under the influence of Vatican II.

## 1. The Historical Development of the Liturgy of the Hours Prior to Vatican II

We begin our survey with the sixteenth century because it was the start of a new era in the liturgical history of SMC. In particular, it was marked by the arrival of Western missionaries on the Malabar coasts.

### 1.1. Official Attempts at Liturgical Reform

From sixteenth century onwards there were attempts to Latinize the LH of SMC.<sup>10</sup> On Dec 21 1923, by the encyclical *Romani Pontifices* Pius XI established a new Malabar Hierarchy and on Dec 1, 1934 he called for a liturgical reform of the SMC.<sup>11</sup> The Congregation for the Oriental Churches<sup>12</sup> thereupon published the book entitled *Breviarium juxta Riturum Syrorum Orientalium id est Chaldaeorum*<sup>13</sup> in 1938 as the official books of the "Divine Praises" of the Assyro-Chaldean Church and SMC.<sup>14</sup> It had first been edited in 1886-1887 in three volumes by Paul Bedjan. The history of LH in SMC prior to Bedjan's edition by and large ran parallel to that of the Chaldean Church.<sup>15</sup>

### 1.2. Other Initiatives to Reform the Liturgy of the Hours

Many individuals and organisations were involved in the reform of the LH in SMC before Vatican II and they also published liturgical

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<sup>9</sup>Kanichikattil, *To Restore or to Reform?*, xvii.

<sup>10</sup>John Moolan, *The Period of Annunciation - Nativity in the East Syrian Calendar: Its Background and Place in the Liturgical Year*, Oriental Institute of Religious Studies Publications 90, Kottayam: Oriental institute of religious studies, 1985, 3.

<sup>11</sup>Cyril Korolevsky, *Living Languages in Catholic Worship: An Historical Inquiry*, Trans. Donald Attwater, London: Longmans, 1957, 137. Moolan, *The Period of Annunciation*, 5.

<sup>12</sup>The Congregation for the Oriental Churches. Henceforth denoted as COrc.

<sup>13</sup>Varghese Pathikulangara, *Divine Praises and Liturgical Year* (4 vols.): *Chaldeo-Indian Liturgy*, vol. 4, Kottayam: Denha Services, 2000, 76.

<sup>14</sup>Moolan, *The Period of Annunciation*, 5.

<sup>15</sup>Priests used to celebrate Divine Office in common. Thomas Mannoorampampil, "Orientalium Ecclesiarum and the Syro-Malabar Liturgy: Historical and Theological Perspective," *Christian Orient* 28, 3 (2007) 109.

books including LH. Kuriakose Elias Chavara, the then Vicar General of the Syro-Malabarians, made an abbreviation of the available manuscripts for the clergy in the second half of the nineteenth century. It was printed and published from the seminary press at Puthenpally in 1876. It contained practically one week's celebration to be repeated all through the liturgical year. This volume was in use till 1967, when the first vernacular volume was published. The Divine Office for the feast days was not included in the above said volume. Chavara himself compiled a different volume for the Feasts. He translated some prayers from the *Breviarium Romanum* and added to the Syriac originals. The feasts were all rearranged according to the Latin calendar as the Church then was making use of it for the celebration of the Eucharist. But his death brought the project to an end.<sup>16</sup>

A lot of liturgical books were published in vernacular after Vatican II and most of them compiled by Fr Abel, CMI were extensively used in SMC. There were liturgical books translated from the Syriac originals in the East Syrian tradition, by Denha Services used in several dioceses.<sup>17</sup> But those liturgical books lack official approval.<sup>18</sup> Since officially approved text for LH was not available, the SMC members were forced to use the texts published by individuals and this situation continued even after Vatican II for a long time. The following section presents the norms given by Vatican II for liturgical reform.

## 2. Vatican II and its Call for the Renewal of the Liturgy

Some norms laid down by the Constitution, as the document itself states, "can and should be applied both to the Roman rite and also all other rites" (SC, 3). Since Vatican II, the SMC has received many guidelines in view of restoring and reforming the liturgy. Of these some are of a general nature and others with specific indications.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>16</sup>Charles Payngot, "Some Particular Elements in the Liturgical Tradition of the St. Thomas Christians" in *Catholic Eastern Churches: Heritage and Identity*, Rome: Mar Thoma Yogam, 1994, 263.

<sup>17</sup>Thadikkatt, *Liturgical Identity*, 133.

<sup>18</sup>Mannoorampampil, "Orientalium Ecclesiarum," 108.

<sup>19</sup>CORC, Report on the State of Liturgical Reform in the Syro-Malabar Church, Rome 1980; Observations on the Order of the Holy Mass, Rome, 1983; Final Judgement Concerning the Order of the Syro-Malabar Qurbana, Rome 1985; Directives on the Order of Syro-Malabar Qurbana, Rome, 1988; Instruction, Rome, 1996; Besides, in addition to CCEO, there are also speeches of Pope John Paul II

## 2.1. Principles for Reform

Some general norms for liturgical reform found in SC and other Church documents after Vatican II are analyzed first in this section with a special focus on their expediency in SMC.

### 2.1.1. Revision Based on Sound Tradition and Contemporary Needs

SC, 4 invites for a revision of rites. The criteria for revision are: carefully done in the light of sound tradition and in order to give new vigour to meet the needs of modern times. These two aspects are to be equally attended (SC, 4). For it, SC, 23 suggests theological, historical and pastoral research. The Instruction for applying the liturgical prescriptions of the Code of Canons of the Eastern Churches § 19 repeats this exhortation and affirms that this should be carried out in the desired way.<sup>20</sup> Nevertheless, while modifying ancient liturgical practice, coherence with context and homogeneity with symbolic language, with images and the specific style of the particular church is to be considered.<sup>21</sup> Though SC, 4 suggests revision, the Fundamental Doctrinal Principles for an authentic Liturgical Reform of 1980<sup>22</sup> says: "Liturgy of the SMC should remain faithful to the traditional Syro-Malabar Liturgy and to the norms of the OE<sup>23</sup> 6 in connection with nos. 5 and 12."<sup>24</sup> OE, 6 elucidates the fidelity to the authentic liturgical tradition. But in order to know what is to be preserved they should acquire greater knowledge of their own rites and their ancestral traditions.

### 2.1.2. Noble Simplicity

One of the norms based upon the didactic and pastoral nature of the liturgy is as follows: "The rites should be distinguished by a noble simplicity. They should be short, clear, and free from useless repetitions. They should be within the people's power of comprehension, and

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addressed to the Syro-Malabar Bishops, Communications from Cardinal Rubin, Prefect of the COrc etc.

<sup>20</sup>Instruction for applying the liturgical prescriptions of the CCEO, 20. Henceforth denoted as Instruction. Available at, [http://www.vatican.va/roman\\_curia/congregations/orientchurch/Istruzione/pdf/istruzione\\_inglese.pdf](http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/orientchurch/Istruzione/pdf/istruzione_inglese.pdf) accessed on 12/12/12. The Code of Canons of the Eastern Churches (CCEO) came into force of law on October 1, 1991.

<sup>21</sup>Mannoorampampil, "Orientalium Ecclesiarum," 113.

<sup>22</sup>Fundamental Doctrinal Principles for an authentic Liturgical Reform of 1980. See the full document in OIRSI, *Roman Documents on the Syro-Malabar Liturgy*, vol. 173, Kottayam: OIRSI, 1995, 34.

<sup>23</sup>*Orientalium Ecclesiarum* (OE), is the Vatican II's Decree on the Eastern Catholic Churches.

<sup>24</sup>Mannoorampampil, "Orientalium Ecclesiarum," 97.

normally should not require much explanation" (SC, 34). 'Simplicity' of the rites, however, should be understood in the right perspective. Vernacularisation of the liturgy was in view of simplifying it. Avoidance of clumsiness in the rites, omission of certain repetitions etc., too were part of simplification.<sup>25</sup>

### **2.1.3. Active Participation and the Promotion of Sacred Scripture**

One of the thrusts of Vatican II liturgical reform was active participation of the people. The purpose of any reform is to facilitate the full, conscious and active participation of the faithful (SC 14, 19 & 21). Those who attend the liturgy should know the meaning of prayers and actions since liturgy is to be lived, and not merely to be performed in the Church building. SC, 21 reminds that the revision of the order should help people to make that part more clear and the correlation is brought forth clearly.<sup>26</sup> Another important call of SC is for the promotion of sacred scripture in liturgy (SC, 51, 92). In order to achieve the restoration, progress, and adaptation of the sacred liturgy, love of Scripture which is the venerable tradition of both East and West is highly recommended (SC, 24).

### **2.1.4. Competent Authority and Revision of Liturgical Books**

SC provides some general norms preserving the authority of the Apostolic See or bishop or competent territorial bodies of bishops legitimately established for the regulation of liturgy (SC, 22). SC, 22 instructs that no other individual including priests is allowed to make changes in the sacred liturgy (SC, 39). OE, 23 makes clear who the legitimate authorities in liturgical matters are. SC, 25 asks for the revision of the liturgical books as soon as possible. Detailed study finds that the revision of liturgical books mentioned in it are concerning the Roman rite only (SC, 38).

### **2.1.5. The Good of the Church and the Organic Growth of Liturgy**

The constitution restricts innovations unless it contributes and requires for the genuine good of the Church and produces organic growth of the liturgy. Especially, it instructs that "as far as possible, notable differences between the rites used in adjacent regions should be avoided" (SC, 23). In 1988 the COrC made the following statement: "The good of the faithful (*'bonum fidelium'*) is the pastoral norm

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<sup>25</sup>Nariculam, *The Syro-Malabar Liturgical Reform and Pastoral Adaptation*, Available at <http://nelsonmcbs.wordpress.com/2012/06/23/the-syro-malabar-liturgical-reform-and-pastoral-adaptation/> accessed on 6/1/13.

<sup>26</sup>Mannoorampampil, "Orientalium Ecclesiarum," 98.

governing all liturgical legislation.”<sup>27</sup> The Council which desires that the traditions of each Individual Church remain whole and entire, wishes also “to adapt its own way of life to the needs of different times and places” (OE, 2).<sup>28</sup>

### **2.1.6. Norms for Experimentation**

Antony Nariculam observes that SC has laid down some norms for experimentation which is directly concerned with the Roman Rite. These norms are given in the context of ‘radical adaptations of the liturgy’ which entails ‘great difficulties’ (SC, 40). Here the document is referring to the liturgical inculturation. The Instruction does not speak about ‘experimentation’ as such, though it does refer to the need of revising and adapting the liturgical texts for the contemporary man and woman.<sup>29</sup> It is up to the Synod of Bishops to devise a methodology for experimenting the liturgical texts.

## **2.2. Dispute over the Expediency**

There are debates over the recommendations of SC for the liturgical renewal with regard to the Eastern Rites. Careful discernment is essential while applying the norms in SC in Oriental Churches or Rites. Scholars like Thomas Mannooramparampil argue that since the whole document of SC was mainly meant for the Latin liturgy, the council did not point out which principles concern the oriental liturgies also.<sup>30</sup> They say that these norms which are exclusively meant for the Latin liturgy are misinterpreted to be also for the Orientals. The document is both disciplinary and doctrinal and so not a decree but a constitution.<sup>31</sup> To support this argument that SC does not provide norms for the Oriental Churches, they quote the Roman documents of 1985<sup>32</sup> and 1996 and find that the

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<sup>27</sup>OIRSI, *Roman Documents*, 143.

<sup>28</sup>Antony Nariculam, *The Syro-Malabar Liturgical Reform and Pastoral Adaptation*.

<sup>29</sup>Instruction § 18-20.

<sup>30</sup>Mannooramparampil, “Orientalium Ecclesiarum,” 94.

<sup>31</sup>Mannooramparampil, “Orientalium Ecclesiarum,” 95.

<sup>32</sup>“It should be remembered in this connection that the conciliar constitution on the sacred liturgy is only in its most general principles applicable to all liturgical traditions, not in its detailed prescriptions which hold good for the Roman tradition. Appeals made to Vatican II to justify certain changes in Oriental texts and usages are in not a few cases simply renewed attempts at latinization.” OIRSI, *Roman Documents*, 113. “The practical norms of the constitution and those of the Code of canons promulgated in 1983 must be understood as affecting only the Latin Church. The principles and norms of liturgical nature which directly concern the Eastern Churches are found instead in various conciliar documents such as *Lumen Gentium*

documents UR<sup>33</sup> and OE provide more insight regarding the renewal of the liturgy of SMC.<sup>34</sup> The fidelity to the Vatican II is found in respecting the individuality of each Church which in turn should keep its whole and entire tradition.<sup>35</sup> OE 3 and SC 4 repeat the equal dignity and authority of all the rites and express the wish to preserve and foster them.

Nariculam observes that since, as noted above, the good of the faithful ("*bonum fidelium*") is the pastoral norm governing all liturgical legislation, diversity and not uniformity is the rule today. To a certain extent, diversity has become 'normal' in the celebration of the Syro-Malabar liturgy, due to the options provided in the liturgical texts. All the more, this is true in the case of LH of the SMC. Diversity in the use of texts has become normal for LH also even after publishing approved official prayer texts. The next part describes the discussions on the nature of liturgical reform within the SMC.

### 2.3. Restoration or Renewal? Inculturation?

The liturgical reform in SMC was affected by the disputes over the nature of reform itself which led to the debates over the liturgical identity of the Rite. One can find diverse opinions on the reasons of the issue.<sup>36</sup> SC, 21 summons for a general restoration of the liturgy which is to be done with great care since liturgy has both divine and human elements. One group insisted that the restoration of the liturgy is the first concern of the Council before the renewal of it for both the Eastern and Latin rites.<sup>37</sup> In their view, the policy of SMBC<sup>38</sup>

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(23), *Unitatis Redintegratio* (14-17) and even more importantly in *Orientalium Ecclesiarum*. These exalt the inalienable value of the specific and thus diversified traditions of the Eastern Churches. After the Second Vatican Council, the most important collection of norms for the Eastern Churches is constituted by the code of canons of the Eastern Churches." OIRSI, *Roman Documents*, 170.

<sup>33</sup>*Unitatis Redintegratio* (UR), Decree on Ecumenism of Vatican II was passed by a vote of 2,137 to 11 of the bishops and was promulgated by Pope Paul VI on November 21, 1964.

<sup>34</sup>Mannoorampampil, "Orientalium Ecclesiarum," 95-96.

<sup>35</sup>Mannoorampampil, "Orientalium Ecclesiarum," 96.

<sup>36</sup>For an analysis of the different reasons see, Vazhappilly Francis, "A Sacramental Reinterpretation of Syro-Malabar Christian Identity," 97-112.

<sup>37</sup>Thomas Mannoorampampil, "Response to the Holy See, the SMBC and SMBS on the Inculturation of the Syro-Malabar Liturgy: A Study," in *Inculturation and the Syro-Malabar Church*, ed., Bosco Puthur, Kochi: LRC, 2005, 95-96. "Fundamental Doctrinal Principles for an authentic Liturgical Reform" in 1980 says "Liturgy of the SMC should remain faithful to the traditional Syro-Oriental Liturgy and to the norms of the conciliar decree OE, 6 in connection with OE, 5 and OE, 12. There should not be any change unless by reason of proper and organic progress." *Roman Documents*,



that restoration, revision and adaptation of the liturgy should go together does not agree with the policy of the Roman Documents which demand restoration as a prerequisite and basis for any reform.<sup>39</sup> The document of 1980 includes a call to promote double integration: in an Eastern Christian direction through deeper contact with the Syriac liturgical, theological, and spiritual tradition and in an Indian direction.<sup>40</sup>

M. Nin says that "there has not been a liturgical movement in the Eastern Churches as occurred in the West in the twentieth century."<sup>41</sup> In the Latin West the strong liturgical movement at work culminated in the reform of Vatican II and it was a natural outcome of the whole process. The situation of Eastern Churches was different. Nevertheless, SMC has a history of revision of liturgical texts before Vatican II.<sup>42</sup>

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33-38. 1985 doc. says "in keeping with the conciliar directives, it desires also to foster and promote the restoration and the revival of the full, spiritual and ecclesial heritage of the ancient and glorious Indian Church of the Syro Malabar Rite." *Roman Documents*, 114. The Council's first call was for restoration of the authentic tradition where it has been lost (OE, 6, 12) and it should not be misunderstood as a backward move. ORISI, *Roman Documents*, 114 & 120.

<sup>38</sup>The special meeting of SMBC convened on 12-14 August 1974 at the Archbishop's House Ernakulam decided that restoration, revision and adaptation of the liturgy should go together, keeping the identity of the rite having in view its organic growth in the light of the Vatican Decrees. Thadikkatt, *Liturgical Identity*, 129.

<sup>39</sup>Mannoorampampil, "Response to the Holy See," 97.

<sup>40</sup>OIRSI, *Roman Documents*, 33.

<sup>41</sup>Manuel Nin, "The Liturgical Heritage of the Eastern Churches," in *Catholic Eastern Churches: Heritage and Identity*, ed. Paul Pallath, Rome: Mar Thoma Yogam, 1994, 25.

<sup>42</sup>The revision of SM liturgical texts started with the establishment of the CORC and continued after the restoration of the SM hierarchy in 1923. Mannoorampampil, *Syro Malabar Kurbanayude Charitra Paschathalam*, 75. Thadikkatt, *Liturgical Identity*, 113. The whole process began with demand of SMB for a Syriac translation of the Roman Pontifical in 1908 which was rejected by the Holy See, saying 'Latinisation should not be encouraged among the Orientals.' Cyril Korolevsky, *Living Languages in Catholic Worship: An Historical Inquiry*, 135. The Holy See took initiative for the restoration of the SML. But there was resistance for the restoration from those who claimed that SM rite is distinct from pure Chaldean rite. See for details, Thomas Mannoorampampil, *The Restoration of the Syro Malabar Qurbana*, Kottayam: Oriental Institute of Religious Studies, 1987, 7; Antony Vallavanthara, "The Liturgical Year of the St. Thomas Christians. Attempts at Restoration: A Historical Investigation" (Doctoral dissertation, Université catholique de Louvain, 1990), 11-12. Alapatt G., Letter, 30 November 1938, "No Return to Chaldeism," *Ernakulam Missam* 45, 9 (1975) 325-329. Kandathil A., Letter to CORC. 6 June 1955, "Chaldean Liturgy Not to be Restored," *Ernakulam Missam* 43, 6 (1973) 67; The attempts continued in 1950s through Cardinal Tisserant and P.J. Podipara. On 10<sup>th</sup> March 1954 Pope Pius XII nominated a Commission to edit the texts of the

The reform of the SM *Qurbana*<sup>43</sup> ended with liturgical controversy and even after the Holy See approved a text in 1989, the debate continued leading to a crisis of the liturgical identity of the SMC.<sup>44</sup> All these discussions delayed the actual process of liturgical reform in the SMC and since the entire attention was in *Qurbana*, the LH was neglected. How these events do affected the impact of Vatican II on the reform of the LH of SMC? What influence the Council had on the revision of this prayer is analyzed in the next section.

### 3. The Revision of the Liturgy of the Hours after Vatican II

SC, 89 mainly gives the norms to revise the LH of Roman Rite.<sup>45</sup> From other articles of SC, some common norms could be drawn for the liturgical reform of the Eastern rites too.<sup>46</sup> But later Roman Documents for SMC call for restoration and rediscovery of its tradition. OE, 22 obviously demands for the restoration of the ancient communal celebration of the LH of the Eastern Churches. There had been the obligation for the clergy to recite the divine office in public in the East Syrian Church and the faithful were encouraged to participate in it.<sup>47</sup> Instruction provides norms of liturgical reform for Eastern Churches. Instruction § 98 demands the restoration of the communitarian celebration of the Divine Praises according to the

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*Qurbana*, the Sacramentary and the Divine Praises. See Mannoorampampil, *Syro Malabar Kurbanayude Charitra Paschathalam*, 83, Taft, "Syro Malabar Liturgical Controversy," in *Acts of the Synod of Bishops of the Syro-Malabar Church Held in the Vatican from 8 to 16 January 1996*, ed., Porunnedom, J. Syro-Malabar Major Archiepiscopal Curia, 1996, 124, Thoomkuzhy, "Liturgy of the Syro-Malabar Church," in *Acts of the Synod of Bishops of the Syro-Malabar Church Held in the Vatican from 8 to 16 January 1996*, ed., Porunnedom, J., Syro-Malabar Major Archiepiscopal Curia, 1996, 96.

<sup>43</sup>The revision and translation of the *Qurbana thaksa* had some tensions since the 1968 text was criticised for being a deformation of East Syrian tradition. For a study of the 1968 text see, G. Vavanikunnel and Johannes Madey, "The 'Reform' of the Restored Syro-Malabar *Qurbana*," in *Malabar Church*, Rome: Pontificium Institutum Orientalium Studiorum, 1970, 87-97.

<sup>44</sup>The debate was between those who argue that the liturgical identity of the SMC is fully East-Syrian (Chaldean) and those who wish to adapt the SML to the Indian context without neglecting the positive elements received from other traditions. Karotemprel, *The Syro-Malabar Church Today*, 67.

<sup>45</sup>SC, 89 speaks of major hours Lauds and Vespers, then of Compline, Matins, Prime and the minor hours of *Terce*, *Sext*, and *None*. From the details it is obvious that SC, 89 refers to Roman Office alone.

<sup>46</sup>SC, 90 says that the divine office is the public prayer of the Church and steps must be taken to improve the understanding of the liturgy and of the Bible, especially of the Psalms.

<sup>47</sup>Mannoorampampil, "Orientalium Ecclesiarum," 101.

liturgical books.<sup>48</sup> Since the LH was upheld with special care in the East not only in monastic communities but also in parishes, CCEO reminds of the obligation to celebrate them in the cathedrals, parishes, rectorial churches, religious communities and seminaries (CCEO cann 199 § 2:377, 473). In addition to the necessity to observe the prescriptions of the liturgical books (can. 309 of CCEO), there should be true mystagogical program to make the faithful understand the meaning and value of this prayer.<sup>49</sup>

### 3.1 Important Steps towards Renewal

Even before the Vatican II decision to use vernacular for liturgical celebrations, the Syro-Malabar Bishops were asked by Rome to abridge the officially published *Breviarium (Romae 1938)*, translate it into Malayalam and publish it for regular use. Still, they succeeded in bringing out the first volume in Malayalam, which is for the weeks of Great Fast, only in 1967. Another volume for the weeks of Resurrection appeared in 1968 and a third one for the periods of *subara* (Annunciation), Christmas and *Denha* (Epiphany) in 1971. All these were published by the Syro-Malabar Central Liturgical Committee with the permission of the Syro-Malabar Bishops Conference. In 1982 the LH for the periods of Apostles, Elia-sliva-Moses and Dedication of the Church were published. In 1986 the whole LH in three volumes with provisional approval from the Congregation was published. For religious sisters a single volume was published arranged in seven weeks, without any regard for the liturgical year.<sup>50</sup> Of these volumes, the first one for the weeks of Great Fast was translated in fidelity to the approved Syriac sources. The volume for the weeks of Annunciation and Epiphany and the one for the weeks of Resurrection (Ernakulam 1968) were not faithful to the Syriac sources.<sup>51</sup>

#### 3.1.1. The Liturgical Commission

The Syro-Malabar Bishops' conference convened on August 21-24, 1974, appointed a Commission under the Chairmanship of Mar Joseph Powathil for preparing authentic texts for the LH in Malayalam. It prepared the text for each liturgical season and sent

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<sup>48</sup>"The ancient tradition of celebrating the DP with the people should be restored without delay so as not to deprive the faithful of a privileged source of prayer, nourished by treasures of authentic doctrine." Instruction, 79.

<sup>49</sup>Instruction, §98.

<sup>50</sup>Mannoorampampil, "Orientalium Ecclesiarum," 107.

<sup>51</sup>Mannoorampampil, "Orientalium Ecclesiarum," 108.

them for study and consideration to all the Bishops, the Central Liturgical Committee members and other experts. In 1982-1983, the whole text was printed in three volumes and was given for experimental use in few institutions, mainly, the St Thomas Apostolic Seminary at Vadavathoor, Kottayam.

In 1984 and 1985, SMBC meetings decided not to allow private individuals<sup>52</sup> to publish liturgical texts, and that they should be published by the Bishops' Conference.<sup>53</sup> The Central Liturgical committee convened on July 11-12, 1985 discussed in detail these texts and submitted them to the Bishops' Conference with its own suggestions. The Bishops' Conference on November 6-7, 1985 took decision and asked the Liturgy Commission Chairman to publish it for use, incorporating the agreed upon corrections of the Bishops' Conference. Thus it was published in a single volume under the copyright of the Syro-Malabar Bishops' conference in December 1986. SMBC published a Malayalam translation of the LH in 1986 with the name the Liturgy of the Hours of the Syro Malabar Church.<sup>54</sup>

### **3.1.2 The Liturgical Research Centre**

The Liturgical Research Centre (LRC) established after SMC having the status of a Major Archiepiscopal Church<sup>55</sup> helped the revision of the texts with research studies and seminars.<sup>56</sup> In 2002 the COrc published a single volume of LH which is recommended as the basic

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<sup>52</sup>Fr Abel CMI worked for translation and creation of liturgical books at the request of Cardinal Parecattil, the President of Syro-Malabar Liturgical Committee. For details of his work see, Thadikkatt, *Liturgical Identity*, 131. The CMI St Joseph's province of Kottayam has granted the copyright of the liturgical books published by Fr Abel to the Liturgical Commission of the SMC. *Synodal News*, 13, 1&2 (Dec 2005) 123.

<sup>53</sup>In the context of the unauthorized editions of Liturgical Texts like that of Fr Abel or Denha services, it was urgent to publish official editions of all liturgical books in Malayalam. Thadikkatt, *Liturgical Identity*, 134.

<sup>54</sup>S.M.B.C., *Yamaprarthanakal* (Malayalam), Tiruvananthapuram: St Joseph's press, 1986.

<sup>55</sup>SMC was elevated to a Major Archiepiscopal church. *Synodal News* 1, no. 01 (August 1993): 12-13. LRC started on 10<sup>th</sup> April 1999.

<sup>56</sup>The IV Synod (1996) decided to erect a research centre at Mount St Thomas and the VI Synod (1998) decided to take prompt steps to establish it in view of arriving at a definitive convergence on liturgical matters. Liturgical Research Centre (LRC) conducted seminars for the members of the CLC from Nov 26-28 2002 and from 30<sup>th</sup> March to April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2004 on the history, theology structure and salient features of the LH in the light of the original sources, the experimental text in use today and other available sources. From the report of SM Commission for Liturgy 2004.

text.<sup>57</sup> The text contains only one week's LH for each liturgical season (the seasons of *Elijah-Sliba'* and *Muse'* are joined together). Feast days are not included. The *Dawidaja'*, the Psalter is in full according to the Syriac sources. Besides being faithful to the approved sources, appropriate passages from other writings of the fathers are also included. Insights of Vatican II are incorporated mainly in the *Karozuta'*, the proclamation prayer of Night Liturgy. Above all, it has brought back almost all the celebrational and ritual details, such as the use of the sanctuary veil, incensing, lighting of the lamps, antiphons and refrains, ritual repetitions, processions, and so on, which were lost during the long period of vernacular experimentation.<sup>58</sup>

### 3.2. The Present Status of Reform

The Synod of 1996 decided to ask the Commission for Liturgy to start reviewing the experimental texts of the LH urgently and to get them translated into English.<sup>59</sup> The Synod approved a new structure of LH according to the structure of the text of Bedjan and decided to print it in simple, solemn and most solemn forms as suggested by LRC, as one book in 2004.<sup>60</sup> A sub-committee for the preparation of the text of the propria of the LH was convened in 2011.<sup>61</sup> The English

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<sup>57</sup>P. Bedjan, *Breviarium juxta ritum Syrorum orientalium id est Chaldaeorum*, S. Congregationem "Pro Ecclesia Orientali," Roma, 2002.

<sup>58</sup>Pathikulangara, *Divine Praises and Liturgical Year*, 79.

<sup>59</sup>*Synodal News*, vol. 9, Feb 1996, 35.

<sup>60</sup>The seminar conducted by LRC helped to prepare the final text of LH of SMC. See footnote 72. Fr Pauly Kannookadan presented the proposed structure of LH and the Synod approved it with some modifications. *Synodal News*, Vol.12, Nos 1 & 2, Dec 2004, 22-23, 42. The text of the Psalms was approved and the general structure of the LH was in preparation in 2007. The Synod of 2007 decided to publish the liturgy of the Holy Week integrating the LH together with the rituals of the Week with provision to celebrate it also without the LH. From the Synod report of August 27, 2007. 2008 synod took decision to study the practice of praying the LH of a day starting from the evening of the previous day. The same synod authorized Archbishop Joseph Powathil to reprint the book of the LH according to the need of the Church. From the decisions of XVI Synod, 18-29 August 2008. *Synodal News*, Vol 16, Nos 1&2, Nov 2008, 61, 65.

<sup>61</sup>This committee has decided to take all suitable prayers available in Bedjan's *Hudra* and to use the English translation of the prayers by Fr Emmanuel Thelly which is verified with the Syriac text of Bedjan. For *Onitha dakdam* and *Onitha dwasar* new hymns composed in the present text of SMBC or Fr Abel's text may be used and the chosen texts must be in agreement with the spirit of the season and preference for hymns with Patristic texts. Decisions of Sub-committee for the preparation of LH Dec 22, 2011. According to the decisions of the Commission for Liturgy on 22 March 2012

version of the LH approved by the commission for Liturgy was published in 2013.<sup>62</sup> The revision of the LH of SMC is still in progress.

It is to be noted that even today in some parts of the Church the old editions of unapproved texts are used for the official Liturgical prayers of the Church. The exhortation of Vatican II to promote the communal celebration of LH is not yet realized fully. Mar Powathil rightly states that greater attention is to be given to the LH and the sacramental celebration of the SMC.<sup>63</sup>

## Conclusion

This study laid bare a double influence of Vatican II in the liturgical reform of SMC. On the one hand, Vatican II and SC had changed the direction of the already begun liturgical reform of LH in SMC. On the other hand, it slowed down the whole process because the council recommendations were used for argumentation between different groups within the Church. Nevertheless, there arose a passion to implement the proposals of SC or Vatican II in SMC. However, ignorance about the distorted and deformed condition of its liturgy created problems like the debate over the liturgical identity. In this chaotic situation there has always been a more consistent emphasis on the Eucharist and sacraments, whereby the official liturgical prayer of the Church has not received sufficient consideration in the liturgical reform program. Even today, the whole Church community cannot pray together one single officially approved text of the LH. One may hope, however, that the LH will regain its ancient status, where it was communally celebrated in parishes as well as cathedrals. In addition to that, it may even find its way to the families in the future.

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on the revision of the LH, some changes were proposed regarding certain elements in *Ramsa* and *Lelia*.

<sup>62</sup>The committee for the English version of LH for the use in the formation houses of the religious outside the *territorium proprium* was entrusted the task by the XV Synod, Session 1, January 2007. From the report of the Commission for Liturgy, August 20, 2012.

<sup>63</sup>Joseph Powathil, "Liturgical Identity of Syro-Malabar Church," *Christian Orient* 29, 2 (2008) 53.